

Minutes
Forsyth City Council Meeting
January 21, 2020

Call to Order

Mayor Wilson called the Council Meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Pledge of Allegiance, Invocation and Roll Call

Mayor Wilson led the Pledge of Allegiance. Mr. Howard gave the invocation. Present for the meeting was Mayor Eric Wilson; Councilmembers Mike Dodd, Julius Stroud, Greg Goolsby, John Howard, Chris Hewett, and Melvin Lawrence. Also present was City Attorney, Bobby Melton; City Manager, Janice Hall; and City Clerk, Regina Ivie.

All unanimous votes will be six (6) votes (Dodd, Goolsby, Stroud, Howard, Lawrence and Hewett).

Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve the agenda as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of the Minutes from the January 6, 2020 Council Meeting

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the minutes as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing – Consider application of Janice Slaughter & Freeman Funeral Home with regard to a variance for use at 164 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive

Mr. Melton stated the variance application is requesting the use of the property as a professional office use for the purpose of a Home Health Facility. The current zoning is a R3, residential moderate density. The zoning is not to be changed. The public hearing was advertised in the Reporter on 1/01/2020, 1/08/2020, and 1/15/2020. Planning and Zoning recommend approval.

Mayor Wilson called the public meeting to order and opened the floor for or against the proposed variance. Mayor Wilson requested for a show of hands of those to speak in favor of or to speak against the proposed variance application.

Ms. Slaughter stated the facility will be utilized for a home health agency to dispatch nurses and aids. It will service the surrounding counties.

Mr. Green stated he's in support of the variance, and her business for the City.

Hearing no further comments for or against the matter Mayor Wilson closed the floor for the public hearing.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the application of Janice Slaughter for the proposed variance at 164 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Public Hearing – Adoption of Position Classification and Pay Plan for Employees

Mr. Melton stated this comes before you as a proposed ordinance. It has been advertised in the Reporter on 1/8/20 and 1/15/2020.

Ms. Hall stated during the public hearing to adopt the 2020 Budget; the Pay Plan was presented with all employees being placed on the pay scale with a minimum of a three percent increase.

Mayor Wilson called the public hearing to order and opened the floor for or against the adoption of the position classification & pay plan for employees. Hearing no comments for or against the matter Mayor Wilson closed the public hearing.

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to adopt the position classification and pay plan for the employees. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of agreements with Fitzgerald Water, Light and Bond Commission for excess capacity and excess reserve capacity.

Ms. Hall stated Forsyth is purchasing 2205 kilowatts of reserve capacity. This capacity is only product; no energy is associated with this purchase. The purpose of the purchase to meet the capacity planning shortfall required by MEAG. Total monthly cost is \$551.00.

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the agreements as presented. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

ECG Board Special Election

Ms. Hall stated there is a vacant board seat available for the Electric Cities Board.

No motion was offered.

2020 Census Updates – Leighanne Mitchell

Ms. Mitchell stated Monroe County is one of twelve counties out of 24 that has reached the green status at eighty percent of being fully staffed. Chief Harris and Ms. Mitchell distributed information at Holiday Cove to residents interested in the available positions. Recruiting efforts are still underway. Thirty additional staff members are needed. The rate of pay for census workers is \$14.50 an hour. Mileage is reimbursed based on the IRS guidelines. All census workers will have proper identification and a badge.

James Green Concerns

Mr. Green expressed his concerns regarding the City's procedures as it relates to turning over past due accounts to collections. He further stated that three vehicles were recently stolen from his property. All were recovered, one of which was totaled. Per his conversation with the Chief the assailant hasn't been caught. He stated that for the tow of those vehicles he was charged \$1000 by the towing company. Mr. Green asked Council to have the past due accounts be removed from the Credit Bureau.

Ms. Hall stated that she contacted the collection agency in regards to removing the past due accounts from the Credit Bureau. The collection agency would have to submit documentation to the Credit Bureau stating the charges are fraudulent. Ms. Hall is researching Mr. Green's accounts.

Approval of emergency repair for:

CC&A – not to exceed \$25,000 – Repair/Replace #2 & #3 influent pumps at S. Sewer Plant

Pete Ragula – not to exceed \$25,000 – Replace control panel inside influent station at S. Sewer Plant

Mr. Dodd offered a motion to approve as presented. Seconded by Mr. Hewett; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Special Projects Invoice for Dog Park - Middle Georgia Fence Co. \$24,000.

Mr. Stroud offered a motion to approve the invoice for Middle Georgia Fence in the amount of \$24,000. Seconded by Mr. Dodd; the motion carried unanimously.

Approval of Requisitions Greater than \$5,000

Core & Main \$5,875.00

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to approve the requisitions as presented. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.

City Manager's Report

Ms. Hall provided the following report to Council:

- Council Retreat is scheduled for Sunday, January 26 from 9:00 – 2:00 at Atlanta Hilton. I have provided copies of previous retreat goals along with information for discussion and a draft agenda for this year's retreat. This information is included in your packets from GMA which also contains your tickets and name tag for the event this weekend. If you have received an email with the class presentation that you would like printed, please do not forget to send that to Judy so she can print those for you.
- Accounts Payables report provided for accounts payable checks written from last report provided which was 12/13/2019 through Friday 01/17/2020. Would like to discuss at retreat what information you would like provided to you and how you would like that information provided. We are now running AP checks weekly.
- Continue to have issues with board members not regularly attending board meetings; working with each board that is appointed by council to receive an attendance record after each meeting so that we always know which boards you may need to consider making changes to.
- Fire Chief would like to go ahead and order the fire truck that is in the 2020 SPLOST. If order before end of January and pay for truck in full at order will save approximately \$30,000. This is truck only and equipment will be purchased from SPLOST when truck is ready for equipment. Delivery of truck will take approximately 9 month.
- Remind everyone that the city has what most refer to as Budget Billing and bank drafts. Budget Billing is based upon previous 12 months average of utility bills and true up is done annually in May/June to make adjustments as needed to the average bill. Bank Drafts are done monthly on the bill due date. Bank drafts can be setup on the website through utility bill payment tab. Applications for budget billing can be picked up at City Hall.
- Tammie Pierson, Kerri Swearingen, and I had conference call with Night Market company to get more information on what they provide and if "trial run" as requested by council is possible. Main Street will get letters out to each business that could be impacted by this change to our concert series and also meet with each business individually to get feedback from each. If positive feedback is received, will get agreement to council for approval with first "trial run" Night Market to be held in May & June. July is fireworks so no concert. Will assess how May & June events went in late June and early July to determine if continuing or if not a good fit for Forsyth.

- City Hall Annex roof – new roof in 2014 did not include work on the 5 vents located on the roof of City Hall Annex. A sealant was run around each at the time the new roof was installed but the sealant has deteriorated and is causing leaks now. Roof Core will do the work necessary to properly flash the vents at a cost of \$7500. Bringing in a different roofing company to do the work could jeopardize the warranty on the roof. Have funds remaining from the interior work and will use that money to do the work.
- Contracts have been sent to Womack Paving for the Highway 41 patching project. Once those are received, we will know project start date but that should be fairly soon.
- Company that was awarded bid to remove and replace mulch at Kynette playground is not responding to calls from Brian. We have discussed and decided to do this in-house with the help of the prison crews. We can remove the remaining mulch and underlayment, then replace with new underlayment and rubber mulch. Cost to do this will be approximately same or less than \$7280 that was approved for hiring company to do the work. This will be paid from Special Projects Funds.
- Norfolk Southern has closed their portion of the railroad crossing which did not consist of much. They have installed railing to prevent vehicles from accessing the tracks at the edge of the right-of-way.
- Waiting on signs for Dog Park and connecting sidewalk to be completed then will schedule ribbon cutting.
- Bids for construction of new city hall building are due on January 27th. Clark Nexsen will review and have a recommendation to council at the February 3rd council meeting. You will remember that we prequalified the contractors so we should have 7 bids submitted.
- To better notify the public of changes in council meeting dates, council will need to reschedule two meetings for later this year - July 6 is 4th of July holiday and September 7 is Labor Day holiday. Can move those to Tuesday if you would like.
Mr. Hewett offered a motion to change the dates of the first Council meetings in July and September to July 7th and September 8th. Seconded by Mr. Stroud; the motion carried unanimously.
- Tree Board will give away seedlings for saw tooth oaks and persimmons at Persons Bank and United Bank on February 21st beginning at 9:00 a.m. then plant trees for Arbor Day observance at golf course #5 green at noon. Tentatively scheduled Tree Board annual golf tournament for April 10th but will confirm later.
- I have confirmed that the Resolution to increase hotel tax has been received by Representative Dickey's office.
- QuikTrip came to 1st Step meeting and they will be locating on the corner of Patrol Road/Harold G Clarke Parkway (between Floyds Body Shop and Ford dealership). We have several others that are in various stages of the approval process with most being interior renovations for a new business.
- Holiday BP and Stop-N-Shop are completing applications to change ownership for alcohol license. Once all information is received will advertise those for a public hearing.
- George Emami is in the process of completing an application for his micro-brewery. Once all information is received will advertise those for a public hearing.
- Issues asked during last council meeting – Indian Springs Drive sidewalk at Collier Road has been cleaned and cleared of debris; Norvin Place ditches pulled but could not do patch work last week due to rain but hopefully this week if weather warms up; and mirrors at Kimball/Adams intersection did not belong to the City.

City Attorney Report

Mr. Melton had no further business to report.

Mayor's Report

Mayor Wilson stated it's a great time to be in Forsyth. We've had a lot of commercial, and residential growth in the past year or so. He's looking forward to the upcoming retreat. The City has good opportunities. Overall nationwide the economy is good; we are receiving the benefits of that. The First Step program we've implemented shows that we are a City that wants to work with business and we want to grow! We are excited to see what's coming next. Mayor Wilson expressed his appreciation to Ms. Pierson for all that she does.

Council Comments

Mr. Lawrence stated that to help facilitate getting issues resolved he sends his requests to Judy. The process works well for him.

Mr. Stroud inquired about the current state of the Splashpad and when it will be ready to open? Ms. Hall stated it will be open again this year at Spring Break after the resurfacing that needs to be completed.

Mr. Stroud asked about what can be done with the sewage in his area?

Mr. Dodd inquired about the status of the park plans from TSW. Ms. Hall stated that TSW is waiting on feedback from Council regarding implementation.

Mr. Goolsby requested that implementation of the Park Plan be added to the retreat agenda.

Mr. Lawrence requested that status of the speed bumps and resurfacing of streets be added to the retreat agenda.

Public Comments

Mrs. Christie Lambert and Ms. Holly White addressed Mayor and Council regarding the Night Market events. Ms. Lambert stated she felt consistency is important to determine how successful the events will be for the City. She stated that a trial run of two months wasn't a sufficient amount of events to determine how successful the Night Market events will be. She's witnessed in other cities how well events such as this boost revenues for small businesses.

Ms. White stated that events like the Forsythia Festival boost her revenues drastically to get her business through times when business is slower. She feels that consistency is important to better determine how the Night Market events will help business owners. Ms. White recommended a four month trial run with the Night Market events.

Ms. Hall stated the agreement with Night Market will be done for the entire year; a concert on the first Saturday every month except for July.

Chairman Tapley stated Feb 13, 2020 will be Monroe County Day at the Capital in Atlanta beginning approximately at 9:00 a.m. Agenda items are still being worked on.

Executive Session

No executive session was held.

Adjourn

Mr. Hewett offered a motion to adjourn the council meeting. Seconded by Mr. Lawrence; the motion carried unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 7:35 p.m.